New and Revised 2nd Edition

Shaykh Muhammad Sâlih al-'Uthaymeen

Youth's Problems

Issues that Affect Young People

Discussed in Light of the Qur'an and the Sunnah

مشكلات الشباب

الدار العالمية للكتاب الإسلامي

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YOUTH'S PROBLEMS

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Pronunciation and Transliteration Chart

Arabic script	Pronunciation	Transliterated as:
أ	short ‘a’, as in *cat*	a
آ - ى	longer ‘a’, as in *cab* (not as in *cake*)	â
ب	/b/ as in *bell*, *rubber* and *tab*	b
ت	/t/ as in *tap, mustard* and *sit*	t
ة	takes the sound of the preceding diactrical mark sometimes ending in h (when in pausal form): ah, ih, or ooh; or atu(n), ati(n) or ata(n) when in uninterrupted speech	h or t (when followed by another Arabic word)
ث	/th/ as in *thing*, *maths* and *wealth*	th
ج	/j/ as in *jam*, *ajar* and *age*	j
ح	a ‘harsher’ sound than the English initial /h/, and may occur medially and in word-final position as well	ḥ
خ	as in *Bach* (in German); may occur initially and medially as well	kh
د	/d/ as in *do*, *muddy* and *red*	d
ذ	as in *this*, *father*, and *with*	dh
ر	/r/ as in *raw*, *art* and *war*; may also be a rolled r, as with Spanish words	r

Arabic script	Pronunciation	Transliterated as:
ز	/z/ as in *zoo*, *easy* and *gaze*	z
س	/s/ as in *so*, *messy* and *grass*	s
ش	as in *ship*, *ashes* and *rush*	sh
ص	no close equivalent in English, but may be approximated by pronouncing it as /sw/ or /s/ farther back in the mouth	ṣ
ض	no close equivalent in English, but may be approximated by pronouncing /d/ farther back in the mouth	ḍ
ط	no close equivalent in English, but may be approximated by pronouncing /t/ farther back in the mouth	ṭ
ظ	no close equivalent in English, but may be approximated by pronouncing 'the' farther back in the mouth	d̲h̲
ع	no close equivalent in English: a guttural sound in the back of the throat	'
غ	no close equivalent in English, but may be closely approximated by pronouncing it like the French /r/ in 'rouge'	gh
ف	/f/ as in *fill*, *effort* and *muff*	f

Arabic script	**Pronunciation**	**Transliterated as:**
ق	no close equivalent in English, but may be approximated by pronouncing /k/ farther back in the mouth	q
ك	/k/ as in *king*, *buckle* and *tack*	k
ل	/l/ as in *lap*, *halo*; in the word *Allah*, it becomes velarized as in *ball*	l
م	/m/ as in *men*, *simple* and *ram*	m
ن	/n/ as in *net*, *ant* and *can*	n
ـه - ه - هـ	/h/ as in hat; unlike /h/ in English, in Arabic /h/ is pronounced in medial and word-final positions as well	h
و	as in *wet* and *away*	w
و (as a vowel)	long u, as in *boot* and *too*	oo
ي	as in *yet* and *yard*	y
ي (as a vowel)	long e, as in *eat*, *beef* and *see*	ee
ء	glottal stop: may be closely approximated by pronouncing it like 't' in the Cockney English pronunciation of *butter*: *bu'er*, or the stop sound in *uh — oh!*	' (Omitted in initial position)

Diphthongs:

Arabic script	Pronunciation	Transliterated as:
أَوْ ، وْ	Long o, as in *owe*, *boat* and *go*	au, aw, ow
أَيْ ، يْ	Long 'a', as in *able*, *rain* and *say*	ay, ai, ei

Diacritical marks (*tashkeel*):

Name of mark	Pronunciation	Transliterated as:
ـَ fatḥah	very short 'a' or schwa (unstressed vowel)	a
ـِ kasrah	shorter version of ee or schwa (unstressed vowel)	i
ـُ Dammah	shorter version of oo	u
ـّ shaddah	a doubled consonant is stressed in the word, and the length of the sound is also doubled	Double letter
ـْ sukoon	no vowel sound between consonants or at the end of a word	Absence of vowel

Arabic honorific symbols used in this book

(﷾): *Subḥânahu wa ta'âlâ* — 'The Exalted'

(ﷺ): *Ṣalla-Allâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* — 'Blessings and peace be upon him'

(﵇): *'Alayhis-salâm* — 'Peace be upon him'

(﵁): *Raḍiya Allâhu 'anhu* — 'May Allah be pleased with <u>him</u>'

(﵂): *Raḍiya Allâhu 'anhâ* — 'May Allah be pleased with <u>her</u>'

Publisher's Note

All thanks and praise are for Allah, the Exalted, Lord of the worlds. Blessings and peace be upon Muhammad, his family, his Companions, and all those who follow in their footsteps until the Last Day.

Youth is a time of great change and hope for the future. It can be the happiest and most productive time of a person's life, yet this stage of development can also be fraught with numerous psychological, sociological, and spiritual crises. Because the young people of any society carry the future of their nations on their shoulders, their problems and troubles should be of utmost concern for everyone around them and solutions to these difficulties must be practical and concrete.

Islam offers a perfect code of life which addresses human concerns at all stages of life. The dilemmas faced by contemporary young people are no exception. Worries and misconceptions creep into their minds, make them feel confused and distressed, and may cause them to turn in the wrong direction; this may result in their being led astray. Allah the Creator, however, has bestowed upon humanity complete guidance which, if understood and followed, offers direction to even the most troubled minds and hearts. Young people who follow Allah's guidance will become a source of pride, inspiration, and strength for the global Muslim community. They offer hope for the future and a cure for the ills that plague the world. Their reward lies not only in this world but in the eternal life to come.

In this concise book, Shaykh Muhammad Ṣâliḥ al-'Uthaymeen (may Allah have mercy on him), one of the greatest Islamic scholars of the twentieth century, has clearly and intelligently addressed problems of young people and their solutions according to the Qur'an and Sunnah[1] of the Prophet (*ṣalla Allâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* — blessings and peace be upon him).

May Allah accept these noble endeavours from him and through them may He grant us the illumination and guidance to solve all our problems.

Muhammad Abdul Mohsin Al-Tuwaijri
Managing Director
International Islamic Publishing House
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

[1] Sunnah: the practice and collected sayings of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) that together with the Qur'an forms the basis of Islamic law

Translator's Preface

All praise is due to Allah, Lord of all the worlds. May he bestow peace and blessings upon our noble Prophet Muhammad, his family and Companions as well as those who follow their guidance until the Day of Judgement.

It is a great honour that Allah, the Exalted, made it possible for me to translate a book of tremendous importance to today's youth into English. The book is authored by the renowned scholar and sagacious and erudite jurist, Shaykh Muhammad ibn Ṣâliḥ al-'Uthaymeen (may Allah have mercy on him).

My interest in translating this book was aroused by the uniqueness of its title and the simplicity of its style. As a matter of fact, many books have been written on youth and much has been said about them by contemporary Muslim writers and orators but none has been found to be so unique, so precise, and so encompassing as this book entitled: مشكلات الشباب في ضوء الكتاب والسنة meaning *Issues that Affect Young People Discussed in Light of the Qur'an and Sunnah*. The author has carefully analyzed problems facing young adults, especially those subtle and sensitive ones such as ideological and intellectual problems, and proffered for them the best solutions, which are derived from the Qur'an, the Sunnah, and substantial rational proofs, thereby putting the round peg in the round hole. I hope that the reader will find the book interesting and understandable. May Allah reward the author and add this work to the scale of his good deeds.

My work procedure in this book is as follows:

a. I ascribed the numbers of chapters and *âyât* (verses) to their places in the Holy Qur'an where the author did not do so.

b. I verified and classified the quoted *hadiths* (statements or actions of the Prophet (ﷺ), relying on the sayings of past and contemporary scholars of Hadith.[2]

c. I completed the partially-quoted hadiths whenever there was need for that.

d. I made a general commentary on the hadiths quoted in Chapter Five.

e. In translating hadiths I relied on Muhsin Khan's translation of *Ṣaḥeeḥ* Bukhari for hadiths recorded by Bukhari alone. For hadiths agreed upon by both Bukhari and Muslim I consulted Khan's translation of *Al-Lu'lu wal Marjân*. Otherwise, the translations were done by my humble self.

Nevertheless, I do not claim to have given this book the best it needs in translation, I only did the best I could — though it may not be good enough — to bring the meaning of the message that the author would like to pass across as close as possible to English-speaking readers. If I therefore succeed in my mission, the success solely belongs to Allah, but if the mission is unsuccessful, that is attributable to my meagre knowledge and little understanding, and the blame is solely mine. However:

﴾I only intend reform as much as I am able. And my success is not but through Allah. Upon him I have relied, and to Him I return.﴿[3]

(Qur'an 11: 88)

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[2] Hadith: the collected statements and actions of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) that with the Qur'an form the basis of Islamic law

[3] All English meanings of the Qur'anic verses used in this book are adapted=

I beseech Allah the Almighty, Lord of the majestic Throne, to make this humble translation pure for His sake and to reward the author and the translator abundantly. May He also make the book beneficial for all Muslims.

Abdur Raafi' A. Imaam
Madinah

=from the Umm Muhammad translation, Saheeh International Translations (Riyadh: Abul Qasim Publishing House, 1997)

Introduction

All praise is due to Allah, the Exalted. We praise Him, seek His assistance and forgiveness, and return to Him in repentance. We equally seek His protection from our evils and misdeeds. No one can mislead whom He guides and no one can guide whom He misleads.

I testify that there is no god worthy of worship except Allah Alone. He has no partner. I also testify that Muhammad (ﷺ) is His slave and Messenger. May Allah bestow His peace and blessings upon him, his family, his Companions, and those who rightly follow them.

It is my pleasure to discuss with my brothers and sisters one of the most important topics of this age. This concern is not peculiar to Muslim society alone but rather presents itself in every social setting: it is the subject of problems affecting today's young people.

Many ideological and psychological questions creep into the minds of today's young adults that sometimes make them confused about life and they try to escape from that confusion and relieve the distress caused thereby.

The aim of escaping from confusion can never be achieved, however, except through religion and good morals, which are the main ingredients of a sound society and keys to the good of this world and the hereafter. Indeed, it is through them that prosperity and blessings are attained and evils and adversity are averted.

A society can only be made by those who live in it; so also can religion stand firmly only by the help of its adherents. Whenever they stand by it, Allah makes them victorious no matter who their enemies are. Allah, the Exalted, says:

﴿يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ إِن تَنصُرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ يَنصُرْكُمْ وَيُثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَكُمْ ۝٧ وَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ فَتَعْسًا لَّهُمْ وَأَضَلَّ أَعْمَٰلَهُمْ ۝٨﴾ (سورة محمّد: ٧-٨)

﴾O you who have believed, if you support Allah, He will support you and plant firmly your feet. But those who disbelieve — for them is misery, and He will waste their deeds.﴿ *(Qur'an 47: 7-8)*

If religion cannot stand except with the help of its adherents, we — the people of Islam and its flag bearers — are then obliged to set ourselves straight so that we may qualify to lead and guide others and subsequently deserve success from Allah.

It is also our obligation to learn from the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Prophet (ﷺ) that which will qualify us to speak, work, direct people, and propagate Islam and make us capable of using glorified weapons against those who want falsehood and offering clear light to those who want truth.

It is therefore incumbent upon us to put into action all that we learn which emanates from faith, conviction, sincerity, and following the Sunnah. We should not occupy ourselves with speech alone, because the effect of speech that is not supported by action will not go beyond the air that carries it and its end result will be negative. Allah, the Exalted, says:

﴿يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لِمَ تَقُولُونَ مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ ۝٢ كَبُرَ مَقْتًا عِندَ ٱللَّهِ

﴿أَن تَقُولُوا۟ مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٣﴾﴾ (سورة الصَّف: ٢-٣)

﴿O you who have believed, why do you say what you do not do? Great is hatred in the sight of Allah that you say what you do not do.﴾ *(Qur'an 61: 2-3)*

It is, therefore, more suitable for us to start from the beginning and cast a cursory look at our young people and their thoughts and actions so that we can develop their good characteristics and correct their inappropriate ones, because today's youths are tomorrow's elders and they are the basis upon which the future of this Ummah is built. It is in view of this that *Sharia*[4] texts enjoin their perfect upbringing, directing them to all that is good and righteous. When young people, who are the basis upon which the future of this Ummah is built, are good and their goodness is based on strong religious foundations and moral standards, the Ummah will have a bright future and its elders will have righteous successors, Allah willing.

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[4] Sharia: Islamic law derived from the Qur'an and the Sunnah

CHAPTER 1
A Look at Young People

If we take a careful look at young people, we will be able to conclude that they are generally of three categories: the upright, the corrupt, and the confused.

Upright young people

Upright young people are believers — in every sense of the word. They believe in their religion in such a way that they love it and are convinced by and content with it. They regard embracing it as profit and denial of it as a clear loss.

They sincerely worship Allah alone and follow the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) in their words and deeds because of their belief that he was truly a Messenger of Allah and that he is the leader that should be followed.

They observe *ṣalâh* (obligatory prayer) perfectly to the best of their abilities because they believe in its temporal, eternal, and social benefits and advantages as well as in woeful consequences of its neglect for individuals and nations.

They pay *zakâh* (obligatory fixed alms) fully to those who deserve it because they believe that it satisfies the needs of Islam and Muslims: a reason that makes it one of the pillars of Islam.

They fast in the month of Ramadan and abandon their desires and pleasures, whether in winter or summer, because they

believe that it pleases Allah and therefore give what pleases Him preference over their own desires.

They perform the obligatory pilgrimage (Hajj) to the Sacred House of Allah because they love Allah and as a result love His House. They go to places of His mercy and forgiveness and share their experiences with their Muslim brothers and sisters who also visit those places.

They believe that it is Allah who created them as well as the heavens and the earth because they see in the signs of Allah that which leaves no iota of doubt or reluctance in the fact that Allah exists. They see in this universe — vast and marvellous in its shape and order — a decisive proof of the existence, the perfect ability, and the extreme wisdom of its Creator for it is impossible for it to create itself. They know it is also out of the question for it to exist accidentally because it was non-existent before it was created and a thing that is non-existent cannot make another exist because the thing itself is non-existent. They realize it is unfeasible for the universe to exist accidentally because it has a wonderful and symmetrical order that does not change or deviate from the path on which it is destined to move. Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿... فَلَن تَجِدَ لِسُنَّتِ ٱللَّهِ تَبْدِيلًا ۖ وَلَن تَجِدَ لِسُنَّتِ ٱللَّهِ تَحْوِيلًا ﴿٤٣﴾﴾

(سورة فاطر: ٤٣)

﴿...But you will never find in the way of Allah any change, and you will never find in the way of Allah any alteration.﴾

(Qur'an 35: 43)

He also says:

﴿... مَّا تَرَىٰ فِى خَلْقِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ مِن تَفَٰوُتٍ ۖ فَٱرْجِعِ ٱلْبَصَرَ هَلْ تَرَىٰ مِن فُطُورٍ ﴿٣﴾

﴿ثُمَّ ٱرْجِعِ ٱلْبَصَرَ كَرَّتَيْنِ يَنقَلِبْ إِلَيْكَ ٱلْبَصَرُ خَاسِئًا وَهُوَ حَسِيرٌ ﴿٤﴾﴾

(سورة المُلك: ٣-٤)

﴿...You do not see in the creation of the Most Merciful any inconsistency. So return [your] vision [to the sky]; do you see any breaks? Then return [your] vision twice again. [Your] vision will return to you humbled while it is fatigued.﴾ *(Qur'an 67: 3-4)*

If it is agreed that this universe possesses such a marvellous and well-arranged order, it is impossible for it to have existed accidentally because whatever accidentally exists will, as a result, be prone to changes and disruption at any moment.

The upright youth believe in Allah's angels because He speaks about them in His Book and because His Prophet (ﷺ) also spoke about them in the Sunnah. The Qur'an and Sunnah contain many of their descriptions, acts of worship, and the works they carry out that are for the benefit of all creatures, which give us clear-cut evidence of their real existence.

They believe in the Books of Allah which He revealed to His Prophets, that with them they may guide humankind to the straight path, because it is impossible for human intellect to perceive the detailed benefits inherent in acts of worship and human interaction without divine guidance.

They believe that Allah's Prophets and Messengers were sent to call people to all that is virtuous, enjoin all that is good, and forbid all that is evil so that the human race should have no plea against Allah after the coming of the Messengers. The first of them was Âdam and the last of them was Muhammad, may the best of blessings and peace be upon all of them.

They believe in the Last Day: the day people will be resurrected after their deaths in order to be rewarded for their deeds. Whoever does an atom weight of good will see it and whoever does an atom weight of evil will see it *(Qur'an 99: 7-8)*, for that is the result of this life. If this were not so, what then is the logical reason behind it if humankind does not have a day in which good-doers will be rewarded for their good deeds and evil-doers will be compensated for their evil acts?

They believe in predestination, including that it can be good or evil. They accept that everything is in accordance with Allah's ordainment and predestination, while believing in causes and effects and that prosperity and misery have their respective causes.

These young people practice their religion with total sincerity to Allah, His Messenger, Muslim leaders, and Muslim common folk.[5] They deal with their fellow Muslims with the straightforwardness and clarity with which they would like to be treated. Treachery, malpractice, crookedness, or hiding facts have no place in their dealings.

They call to the way of Allah with clear knowledge and in accordance with the methods explained by Allah in His Book. Allah, the Exalted, says:

﴿ٱدْعُ إِلَىٰ سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِٱلْحِكْمَةِ وَٱلْمَوْعِظَةِ ٱلْحَسَنَةِ ۖ وَجَٰدِلْهُم بِٱلَّتِى هِىَ أَحْسَنُ ... ﴿١٢٥﴾﴾

(سورة النّحل: ١٢٥)

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[5] This is a reference to a hadith recorded by Muslim: [The Prophet (ﷺ)] said: «Religion is sincerity. We said: To whom? He said: To Allah and His Book and His Messenger and to the leaders of the Muslims and their common folk.»

﴿Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction, and argue with them in a way that is best...﴾

(Qur'an 16: 125)

They enjoin all that is good and forbid all that is evil because they believe that the prosperity of communities and nations lies in that which Allah has specified in the glorious Qur'an:

﴿كُنتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ ٱلْمُنكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ ... ﴿١١٠﴾﴾ (سورة آل عِمرَان: ١١٠)

﴿You are the best nation produced [as an example] for humankind. You enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and believe in Allah...﴾ *(Qur'an 3: 110)*

They strive to change all that is evil according to the method recommended by the Prophet (ﷺ) when he said: «Whoever of you sees an evil action let him correct it with his hand, and if he is unable to do that then with his tongue, and if he is unable to do so then with his heart.»[6] (Recorded by Muslim)

They speak and accept only the truth because of their understanding that truthfulness leads to righteousness and righteousness leads to paradise, and that a person keeps on telling the truth until he or she becomes a truthful person.[7]

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[6] The remaining part of the hadith is «...and that is the weakest of faith.»

[7] This is in reference to a hadith recorded by Bukhari and Muslim: «Truthfulness leads to righteousness and righteousness leads to paradise. And a man keeps on telling the truth until he becomes a truthful person. Falsehood leads to wickedness and evil-doing and wickedness leads to hellfire and a man may keep on telling lies until he is written before Allah as a liar.»

They love what is good for their Muslim brothers and sisters because of their belief in the hadith: «None of you truly believes until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself.» (Recorded by Bukhari and Muslim)

They are aware of their responsibilities to Allah, the Ummah, and their countries and they always strive for the benefit of the religion, the Islamic nation, and their homelands — far from selfishness and pursuance of personal interests at the expense of other people's interests.

They strive in the way of Allah with His assistance and because of Him only. They strive with sincerity to Him without intending to be seen or heard by people. They strive while seeking assistance from Allah without self-admiration or depending on their wits and energy alone. They strive in the way of Allah within the framework of His religion without exaggeration or negligence. They strive with their words, hands, and property in accordance with the needs of Islam and Muslims.

They are religious and possess good conduct. They are well-mannered, religiously upright, lenient, magnanimous, noble, good-hearted, extremely patient, and tolerant but decisive. They do not waste opportunities or allow sentiments to overpower their sense of reason and the establishment of peace and order.

The balanced and orderly young people work wisely and silently with perfection and quality. They do not waste any opportunities in their lives but rather utilise them in what is of benefit to them and their Ummah. These young people, though they preserve their religion, conduct, and manners, are nevertheless abstentious from all that negate these virtues, such as *kufr* (disbelief), atheism, profligacy, disobedience, indecent manners, and bad dealings.

These young people are a pride for this Ummah and the symbol of its life, its prosperity, and its religion. They are those whom we hope Allah will use to repair the Muslims' damaged condition and illuminate the way for the followers of the right path. They are those who shall attain the bliss of this world and the next, Allah willing.

Corrupt young people

These are young people who are religiously deviating, behaviourally reckless, self-deluded, and engulfed by their own vices. They do not accept truth from others, do not refrain from the falsehood that is inherent in their minds, and are selfish in their conduct.

They are obdurate, do not give truth a chance, and do not care that they neglect obligations that are due to Allah or those that are due to human beings.

They are anarchic and partial in their thoughts, their behaviour, and their conduct. They are proud of their opinions as if truth flows from their tongues alone. They view themselves as infallible but others, according to them, are prone to mistakes and fallacy as long as their views run contrary to their own.

They deviate from the straight path of their religion and from good manners in their behaviour. Their mischievous deeds are portrayed to them as good and they consequently fall among the losers.

﴿ٱلَّذِينَ ضَلَّ سَعْيُهُمْ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ يَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ يُحْسِنُونَ صُنْعًا ﴿١٠٤﴾﴾

(سورة الكهف: ١٠٤)

﴿[They are] those whose effort is lost in worldly life, while they think that they are doing well in work.﴾ *(Qur'an 18: 104)*

They are a calamity to themselves and a catastrophe to society. They bring this Ummah down to the lowest of the low, obstructing its way to glory and honour. They are like a deadly disease that is not easily curable except by the will of Allah alone, Who is All-Powerful.

Confused young people

These young people are the ones who are uncertain, irresolute, and at a crossroad. They know the truth and are sure of it. They live in a religiously conservative society but have the misfortune of being exposed to evil channels from every direction. They are exposed to evils like scepticism about the truthfulness of the Muslim creed, corruption in conduct and behaviour, decadence in actions, attacks on the established customs and traditions, and other various absurd trends.

They live in a mental and psychological whirlpool and stand aghast in front of these trends in confusion, not knowing which of the two options is correct: is it that which includes ideas, concepts, and courses of action that have just been imported to their societies or that which their predecessors and their conservative societies have been doing before the importation of those new ideas? They are so confused and troubled that they sometimes favour the former and on other occasions the latter, depending on the strength of the trends blowing them.

They are passive in their lives and need a strong and captivating element to lead them to the realm of truth and the righteous way. That is very easy if Allah provides them with

righteous *da'wah* preachers (those who call others to embrace Islam) who possess wisdom, knowledge, and good intention.

They are largely found among those who have some Islamic education and culture but who on the other hand study mainly worldly sciences that run contrary to religion, either in reality or according to their imaginations. Hence they stand confused, between the two cultures.

They can free themselves from this confusion, however, by concentrating on Islamic education and learning it from its original sources, the Qur'an and the Sunnah, with the help of sincere scholars, and, Allah willing, this will not be difficult for them.

CHAPTER 2
The Corruption and Problems of Young People

There are many reasons for the corruption and troubles of young people. During the period of youthfulness, human beings go through a number of physical, mental, and intellectual developments. This period is an evolutionary one in which young people experience rapid development in their transformation into adults, hence the need for providing them with means of self-control and ways of curbing self-defiance as well as wise leadership that can lead them to the straight path.

The corruption of young people can be attributed to many factors; prominent among them are:

1. Joblessness

Joblessness is a disease that kills mental, intellectual, and physical capabilities. As a matter of fact, it is inevitable that human beings should move and work; if they are deprived of work and activity, their brains become beset, their intellects become exhausted, the discipline of their minds becomes weak, and devilish insinuations and malicious thoughts take control of their hearts. Evil and wicked intentions may occur to them as a result of the depression that befalls them due to their joblessness.

In order to be cured of this disease, the affected youth should develop interests that suit them like reading, writing, trading, or any other occupation that can stand between them and unemployment and which are capable of making them sound and

useful members of their communities, whether they do the work for themselves or for others.

2. Estrangement between the youth and their elders

This problem manifests in a situation where some elders see corruption in young adults and just stand aloof without making any effort whatsoever to correct them, having lost hope in their reform and consequently hating them or being afraid of them. They may hold a passive attitude towards their condition, whether it is good or bad. These elders have already concluded that all young people are corrupt and therefore nurse psychological grudges against them all: a situation that tears the society apart and causes elders and young people to regard each other with contempt and disdain. This, indeed, is one of the dangers that encircle a society.

This problem, however, can be solved if elders and youths endeavour to remove the estrangement and alienation that exist between them. Both should bear in mind that society, with its younger and older people, is like a single body and if a part of it decays the decadence will affect the whole body.

Elders also are requested to sense the responsibility towards the young people that rests upon their shoulders and eliminate from their minds ideas of hopelessness regarding the piety of the young because Allah is capable of doing anything. Indeed, how often a person straying far has been guided by Allah and thereafter became a torch of guidance and a reformer.

Young people, on their part, should hold their elders in high esteem. They should respect their views and accept their directives because they have achieved degrees of experience and realities of life which the young have not achieved. When the

wisdom of the elders is added to the energy of the youth, the society can indeed become prosperous by the will of Allah.

3. Being in contact with corrupt people and keeping their company

This situation has a great deal of psychological, mental, and moral influence on young people. This is why the Prophet (ﷺ) said: «A person is on the religion of his intimate friend, so let every one of you look critically regarding whom to befriend.» (A reliable hadith recorded by Abu Dâwood, at-Tirmidhi, Imam Aḥmad, and al-Ḥâkim) He (ﷺ) also said: «An example of a bad companion is like the blower of the blacksmith's bellows: he either burns your clothes or you get a bad odour from him.» (Recorded by Bukhari and Muslim; this wording is translated from Bukhari's version)

The solution to this problem is that young people should choose righteous, good, and intelligent people as their companions in order to benefit from their goodness, righteousness, and intelligence. They should consider people very carefully before befriending them by studying their conditions and reputations. If they happen to be of noble character, upright, religious, and of good reputation, they will be long-cherished and a form of wealth. They should therefore stick with them. If, on the other hand, they happen to be people of the opposite character, the young people must be cautious of them, keep away from them, and should not be carried away by their sweet talk and nice outward appearance. This is because these are only deceptive and misleading methods employed by devilish people to attract ingenious souls in order to swell their ranks with them and use that as camouflage to cover their decayed situations. How beautiful is this poet's saying:

Study people, if you would like to take them as brethren;
Scrutinize their affairs and examine them.
If you are fortunate to find an intelligent and pious person;
Hold fast onto him happily, with both hands.

4. Reading and viewing destructive, un-Islamic material in books and magazines, on TV and the Internet

These types of materials make people sceptical about their religion and faith and drag them from excellent morality to the abyss of degeneration. This naturally leads to unbelief and depravity if the young people do not have strong resistance in terms of the sound Islamic education, mental acuteness, and sagacity that can enable them to differentiate between truth and falsehood and between what is useful and what is harmful.

Being exposed to these kinds of ideas also turns young people upside down because it meets fertile ground in their minds for thinking without any hindrance; its roots strengthen and its stem solidifies. This is then reflected in their logic and their lives.

The solution to this problem is to immediately shift to writings and programs that inculcate the love of Allah and His Prophet (ﷺ) in one's heart and those books that help in actualizing faith and virtuous deeds. People should patiently persist in seeking out beneficial information because their souls will put up a strong fight against them in order to coerce them into reading what they were used to before and will make them feel bored and irritated at reading useful books. An illustration of this is that of a person wrestling with his or her soul so as to force it to obey Allah but the soul instead insists on wallowing in falsehood and distraction.

There are many useful books that help in this situation, the most important of which are the noble Qur'an and its *tafseer* (commentary or explanation) written by scholars who base their exegesis on authentically-transmitted hadiths and unequivocal common sense. Equally important and useful are books on hadith, then writings of scholars that are deduced and inferred from the two above-mentioned sources.[8]

5. Wrong assumption of some young people that Islam imposes restrictions on liberties and suppresses human energy

This assumption leads young people into shunning Islam and regarding it as a retrogressive religion that draws its adherents backwards and prevents them from progress and advancement.

In order to solve this problem, the reality of Islam should be unveiled for these youth who are ignorant of it because of their inadequate knowledge of Islam, misconception of it, or both. A poet said:

One who has a bitter and diseased mouth
Will find cold and sweet water bitter
When he drinks it.

Islam, in truth, does not impose restrictions on liberties. Rather, it regulates and perfectly controls them in such a way that one person's liberty will not collide with another's. One who wants absolute freedom will discover that he or she can have it

[8] Many of these wonderful sources are now available on the Internet, but people should take care to take their information from reliable Islamic websites which do not promote content that deviates from the Qur'an and the Sunnah. (Editor)

only at the expense of other people's rights, and if that should happen there will be a clash between the two. Anarchy will be the order of the day and immorality will be let loose.

It is for this reason that Allah calls religious laws *ḥudood* (limits). When the *ḥukm* (ordinance) of a particular issue is *ḥarâm* (forbidden), He (ﷻ) says:

﴿... تِلْكَ حُدُودُ ٱللَّهِ فَلَا تَقْرَبُوهَا ... ﴿١٨٧﴾﴾ (سورة البَقَرَة: ١٨٧)

﴾...These are the limits [set by] Allah, so do not approach them...﴿

(Qur'an 2: 187)

Likewise, when an ordinance on an issue is essential, He (ﷻ) says:

﴿... تِلْكَ حُدُودُ ٱللَّهِ فَلَا تَعْتَدُوهَا ... ﴿٢٢٩﴾﴾ (سورة البَقَرَة: ٢٢٩)

﴾...These are the limits of Allah, so do not transgress them...﴿

(Qur'an 2: 229)

There is also a difference between restrictions that these young people presume and the regulations that Allah, the All-Wise and All-Aware, ordains for His slaves.

In view of this, the issue never should have arisen in the first place as regulation is a realistic matter in all spheres of this life and humans by nature are submissive to such laws. They are submissive to the reign of hunger and thirst and to the order of eating and drinking. Hence, it becomes necessary for them to regulate their eating and drinking in terms of quantity, quality, and variety in order to preserve the health and safety of their bodies.

They are also submissive to the regulation of their social environment, adhering to the norms of their countries in their clothing and actions. They submit, for instance, to the accepted forms of dress, to the customary types of accommodation, and to traffic regulations. If, for whatever reason, they fail to abide by

these norms they will be considered in their societies as abnormal and odd and will be dealt with accordingly.

Therefore, life as a whole involves submission to certain regulations so that things can move along according to set goals. If submission to the social regulations is for the betterment of the society and prevention of anarchy, no citizen should be dissatisfied with conforming. Islamic regulations should also be expected for the well-being of the Ummah. How, then, can some people feel dissatisfied with Islam and feel that it imposes restrictions on liberties? This is but a lie and a false and sinful claim.

Furthermore, Islam certainly does not suppress energy. Rather, it is a vast and spacious ground for mental, intellectual, and physical capabilities. Islam enjoins thinking and contemplation so that humankind may reflect and develop its mental and intellectual capabilities. Allah, the Exalted, says:

﴿قُلْ إِنَّمَآ أَعِظُكُم بِوَٰحِدَةٍ ۖ أَن تَقُومُوا۟ لِلَّهِ مَثْنَىٰ وَفُرَٰدَىٰ ثُمَّ تَتَفَكَّرُوا۟ ... ﴿٤٦﴾﴾ (سورة سَبَإٍ: ٤٦)

﴿Say: I only advise you of one [thing] — that you stand for Allah, [seeking truth] in pairs and individually, and then give thought...﴾ *(Qur'an 34: 46)*

Almighty Allah also says:

﴿قُلِ ٱنظُرُوا۟ مَاذَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ ... ﴿١٠١﴾﴾ (سورة يُونس: ١٠١)

﴿Say: Observe what is in the heavens and earth...﴾ *(Qur'an 10: 101)*

Islam not only enjoins thinking and reflection but also censures and reproves those who do not ponder, reflect, or think. Allah, the Exalted, says:

﴿أَوَلَمْ يَنظُرُوا۟ فِى مَلَكُوتِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَمَا خَلَقَ ٱللَّهُ مِن شَىْءٍ ... ﴿١٨٥﴾﴾

(سورة الأعراف: ١٨٥)

﴾Do they not look into the realm of the heavens and the earth and everything that Allah has created?...﴿ *(Qur'an 7: 185)*

He says in another *âyah* (verse):

﴿أَوَلَمْ يَتَفَكَّرُوا۟ فِىٓ أَنفُسِهِم ۗ مَّا خَلَقَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَآ إِلَّا بِٱلْحَقِّ ... ﴿٨﴾﴾

(سورة الرّوم: ٨)

﴾Do they not contemplate within themselves? Allah has not created the heavens and the earth and what is between them except in truth...﴿ *(Qur'an 30: 8)*

He (ﷻ) says in yet another âyah:

﴿وَمَن نُّعَمِّرْهُ نُنَكِّسْهُ فِى ٱلْخَلْقِ ۖ أَفَلَا يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٦٨﴾﴾ (سورة يس: ٦٨)

﴾And he to whom We grant long life We reverse in creation; so will they not understand?﴿ *(Qur'an 36: 68)*

The enjoyment of reflection and thinking is but an eye-opener to mental and intellectual capabilities. How, then, can some people claim that Islam suppresses energy?

﴿... كَبُرَتْ كَلِمَةً تَخْرُجُ مِنْ أَفْوَٰهِهِمْ ۚ إِن يَقُولُونَ إِلَّا كَذِبًا ﴿٥﴾﴾

(سورة الكهف: ٥)

﴾...Grave is the word that comes out of their mouths; they speak not except a lie.﴿ *(Qur'an 18: 5)*

Islam makes all pleasures that are physically, religiously, and mentally harmless lawful for its followers. It makes delightful foods and drinks lawful for them. Allah, the Exalted, says:

﴿يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ كُلُواْ مِن طَيِّبَٰتِ مَا رَزَقۡنَٰكُمۡ وَٱشۡكُرُواْ لِلَّهِ ... ﴿١٧٢﴾﴾
(سورة البَقَرَة: ١٧٢)

﴾O you who have believed, eat from the good things which We have provided for you and be grateful to Allah...﴿ *(Qur'an 2: 172)*

In another verse He says:

﴿... وَكُلُواْ وَٱشۡرَبُواْ وَلَا تُسۡرِفُوٓاْۚ إِنَّهُۥ لَا يُحِبُّ ٱلۡمُسۡرِفِينَ ﴿٣١﴾﴾
(سورة الأعرَاف: ٣١)

﴾...and eat and drink, but be not excessive. Indeed, He likes not those who commit excess.﴿ *(Qur'an 7: 31)*

Islam also permits the wearing of all types of garments that are reasonable and according to our nature. Almighty Allah says:

﴿يَٰبَنِيٓ ءَادَمَ قَدۡ أَنزَلۡنَا عَلَيۡكُمۡ لِبَاسٗا يُوَٰرِي سَوۡءَٰتِكُمۡ وَرِيشٗاۖ وَلِبَاسُ ٱلتَّقۡوَىٰ ذَٰلِكَ خَيۡرٞۚ ... ﴿٢٦﴾﴾
(سورة الأعرَاف: ٢٦)

﴾O children of Adam, We have bestowed upon you clothing to conceal your private parts and as adornment. But the clothing of righteousness — that is best...﴿ *(Qur'an 7: 26)*

﴿قُلۡ مَنۡ حَرَّمَ زِينَةَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلَّتِيٓ أَخۡرَجَ لِعِبَادِهِۦ وَٱلطَّيِّبَٰتِ مِنَ ٱلرِّزۡقِۚ قُلۡ هِيَ لِلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُواْ فِي ٱلۡحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنۡيَا خَالِصَةٗ يَوۡمَ ٱلۡقِيَٰمَةِۗ ... ﴿٣٢﴾﴾ (سورة الأعرَاف: ٣٢)

﴾Say: Who has forbidden the adornment of Allah which He has produced for His servants and the good [lawful] things of provision? Say: They are for those who believe during the worldly life [but] exclusively for them on the Day of Resurrection...﴿ *(Qur'an 7: 32)*

Islam also permits the enjoyment of spouses for its adherents through legal marriage. This is clearly shown in the following verse:

﴿ ... فَٱنكِحُوا۟ مَا طَابَ لَكُم مِّنَ ٱلنِّسَآءِ مَثْنَىٰ وَثُلَـٰثَ وَرُبَـٰعَ ۖ فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا۟ فَوَٰحِدَةً ... ﴿٣﴾ ﴾ (سورة النّساء: ٣)

﴾...marry those that please you of [other] women, two or three or four. But if you fear that you will not be just, then [marry only] one...﴿ *(Qur'an 4: 3)*

In the area of property acquisition as well, Islam does not suppress the commercial energy of its followers but rather permits them to earn just and mutually-approved profits. This is described in the âyah:

﴿ ... وَأَحَلَّ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْبَيْعَ وَحَرَّمَ ٱلرِّبَوٰا۟ ... ﴿٢٧٥﴾ ﴾ (سورة البَقَرة: ٢٧٥)

﴾...Allah has permitted trade and has forbidden interest...﴿ *(Qur'an 2: 275)*

Allah, the Exalted, also says:

﴿هُوَ ٱلَّذِى جَعَلَ لَكُمُ ٱلْأَرْضَ ذَلُولًا فَٱمْشُوا۟ فِى مَنَاكِبِهَا وَكُلُوا۟ مِن رِّزْقِهِۦ ۖ وَإِلَيْهِ ٱلنُّشُورُ ﴿١٥﴾ ﴾ (سورة المُلك: ١٥)

﴾It is He Who made the earth tame for you — so walk among its slopes and eat of His provision — and to Him is the resurrection.﴿ *(Qur'an 67: 15)*

He says in another verse:

﴿فَإِذَا قُضِيَتِ ٱلصَّلَوٰةُ فَٱنتَشِرُوا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَٱبْتَغُوا۟ مِن فَضْلِ ٱللَّهِ ... ﴿١٠﴾ ﴾

(سورة الجُمُعَة: ١٠)

﴾And when the prayer has been concluded, disperse within the land and seek from the bounty of Allah...﴿ *(Qur'an 62: 10)*

After all this evidence, can anyone still rightly assume or claim that Islam suppresses capabilities?

CHAPTER 3
Issues Troubling the Minds of Young People

Thoughts and delusions that are not compatible with religion do not bother a dead heart, because such a heart is already lifeless and ruined and that is all that Satan wants. It was said to one of the pious predecessors: "The Jews and Christians say that they do not suffer from the problem of *waswâs* (insinuous whispers)." He replied: "They are speaking the truth, for what would Satan want with a house that is in ruins?" [9]

On the other hand, if the heart is lively and contains a degree of *eemân* (faith, belief), Satan will launch a merciless and relentless war against it and will inflict upon it contradictory insinuations about the religion of its owner. This war can be highly destructive if the person succumbs to it. Satan will go to the extent of making the person sceptical about his or her Lord, religion, and belief. If Satan senses any weakness or defeat in the heart, he will prevail upon it until he drags it to apostasy, but if he finds the heart to be powerful and resistant, he will be disgraced and badly defeated.

Nevertheless, all the devilish insinuations that Satan casts on the heart will be ineffective if one uses the cures recommended by the Prophet (ﷺ).

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[9] *Majmoo' al-Fatâwâ* by Ibn Taymiyah, vol. 22, p. 608

Ibn 'Abbâs (*raḍiya Allâhu 'anhu* — may Allah be pleased with him) reported that a man came to the Prophet (ﷺ) and said: «I experience thoughts about things regarding which I would prefer to become charcoal or ashes than to utter them. The Prophet (ﷺ) replied: Praise be to Allah, Who has sent Satan's trick back to him.» (An authentic hadith recorded by Abu Dâwood and Imam Aḥmad)

In another hadith, some of the Companions came to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and said: «O Messenger of Allah! We get some thoughts in our minds which we consider too awful to express. The Prophet (ﷺ) answered: Is that so? They replied: Yes. Then he (ﷺ) said: That is pure eemân.» (Recorded by Muslim) It is as if the Prophet (ﷺ) were telling his Companions: "The meaning of it being pure eemân is that these emerging insinuations and your shunning of them and regarding them as too horrible will cause no harm to your eemân but it is rather an indication that your eemân is pure and unadulterated."

The Prophet (ﷺ) is reported to have said: «Satan may come to one of you and say: Who created so-and-so? Until he says: Who created your Lord? So when he inspires such a question, one should seek refuge with Allah,[10] and give up such thoughts.» (Recorded by Bukhari and Muslim)

In another version, the Prophet (ﷺ) said: «One should then say: I believe in Allah and His Messenger.» (Recorded by Muslim)

The Prophet (ﷺ) also said: «The people will nearly ask too many questions, so that one of them may say: 'Allah created all of

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[10] By saying: "*A'oodhu billâhi min ash-Shayṭân ir-rajeem*": "I seek refuge in Allah from Satan, the accursed."

creation, but who created Allah?' If they say this, then say: ❴Say: He is Allah, [Who is] One, Allah the Eternal Refuge. He neither begets nor is born, nor is there to Him any equivalent.❵ *(Qur'an 112: 1-4)*, spit (without actually releasing spittle) to your left three times, and seek refuge with Allah from the devil.» (a sound hadith according to as-Suyooṭi)

In all the aforementioned hadiths, the Companions (may Allah be pleased with them all) described the disease to the Prophet (ﷺ) and he in turn prescribed the treatment for it in the following four actions:

1. Shunning these insinuations entirely, forgetting them as if they had not existed at all and preoccupying oneself with safe thoughts
2. Seeking refuge with Allah from the thoughts and from the accursed Satan
3. Saying the phrase: "I believe in Allah and His Messenger"
4. Reciting: ❴Say: He is Allah, [who is] One, Allah the Eternal Refuge. He neither begets nor is born, nor is there to Him any equivalent.❵ *(Qur'an 112: 1-4)* then spitting drily (without spittle) to the left side three times saying: "*A'oodhu billâhi min ash-Shayṭân ir-rajeem.* (I seek refuge with Allah from Satan, the accursed)."

CHAPTER 4
Confusion on the Issue of *Qadr*

One of the issues bothering the minds of young people and causing them confusion is the issue of *qadr* (divine predestination, or destiny), because belief in qadr is one of the pillars of faith. One's faith cannot be complete without it. Having faith in qadr means believing that Allah knows and preordains all that happens in the heavens and on the earth. He says:

﴿أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَآءِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۗ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ فِى كِتَـٰبٍ ۚ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ ﴿٧٠﴾﴾ (سورة الحج: ٧٠)

﴾Do you not know that Allah knows what is in the heaven and earth? Indeed, that is in a record. Indeed that, for Allah, is easy.﴿

(Qur'an 22: 70)

The noble Prophet (ﷺ) prohibited arguments and controversy over the issue of qadr. Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) narrated: «The Prophet (ﷺ) emerged while we were arguing about qadr. He got angry, his face became red and he said: Is this what you are commanded to do? Or, with this am I sent to you? Indeed those who were before you perished when they argued over this issue. I command you not to argue over it.» (A reliable hadith recorded at-Tirmidhi)

Getting into discussions on the issue of qadr and engaging in controversy over it puts one into labyrinths from which he or

she will not be able to escape. The safe way therefore lies in cautiously doing good with all your efforts as you are commanded, for Allah has endowed you with intellect and understanding and has sent Messengers to you and revealed Books to them.

﴿رُّسُلًا مُّبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ لِئَلَّا يَكُونَ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ حُجَّةٌۢ بَعْدَ ٱلرُّسُلِ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١٦٥﴾﴾ (سورة النِّسَاء: ١٦٥)

﴾[We sent] Messengers as bringers of good tidings and warners so that mankind will have no argument against Allah after the Messengers. And ever is Allah Exalted in Might and Wise.﴿

(Qur'an 4: 165)

When the Prophet (ﷺ) told his Companions that every person has been destined both a seat in paradise and a seat in hell, they said: O Allah's Messenger! Do we not then depend on what has been destined for us and give up working? The Prophet (ﷺ) replied: «Carry on doing good deeds, for everybody will find what will lead him to his destined place easy to do.» Then he recited:

﴿فَأَمَّا مَنْ أَعْطَىٰ وَٱتَّقَىٰ ﴿٥﴾ وَصَدَّقَ بِٱلْحُسْنَىٰ ﴿٦﴾ فَسَنُيَسِّرُهُۥ لِلْيُسْرَىٰ ﴿٧﴾ وَأَمَّا مَنۢ بَخِلَ وَٱسْتَغْنَىٰ ﴿٨﴾ وَكَذَّبَ بِٱلْحُسْنَىٰ ﴿٩﴾ فَسَنُيَسِّرُهُۥ لِلْعُسْرَىٰ ﴿١٠﴾﴾ (سورة اللّيْل: ٥-١٠)

﴾As for he who gives and fears Allah and believes in the best [reward], We will ease him toward ease. But as for he who withholds and considers himself free of need and denies the best [reward], We will ease him toward difficulty.﴿ *(Qur'an 92: 5-10)*

The Prophet (ﷺ) therefore enjoined his Companions to work and did not allow them to depend on what has been predestined. Those who have been destined to enter paradise will not enter it until

they do deeds of the people of paradise and the ones destined for hellfire will not enter it until they do deeds of the people of hellfire.

Also, actions are within human capacity because people know that Allah has given them abilities to choose the types of actions they like and the capabilities to carry them out. It is with these two capacities that they do what they want and give up what they dislike.

For instance, when a person wants to travel, he or she travels; when the person wants to stay, he or she stays. One who sees an inferno runs away from it, and one who sees a lovable thing advances towards it. As such, acts of obedience and disobedience are also carried out by humans willfully and are given up willfully.

Moreover, there are two problems baffling some people on the issue of qadr.

1. How can the fact that humans do things willingly and give them up willingly without any feeling of being forced to do so correspond with the belief that everything happens according to Allah's predestination and ordainment?

Answer: When we reflect on someone's actions and movements we find that they result from two things: free will and the ability to carry out the actions, for no action can take place without these two factors. Free will and ability are both created by Allah. Free will is an intellectual strength while ability is physical strength. If Allah so wishes, He can deprive humans of their intellect and make them become creatures with no will or deprive them of their abilities and make work impossible for them.

It follows, then, that when someone decides to carry out an action and actually carries it out, it is known to us convincingly that Allah wants the action to be carried out and has ordained it. If not so, Allah would have diverted the person's attention from it and created obstacles between him or her and the ability to execute the plan. A bedouin Arab was asked: "How did you know the power of Allah?" He answered: "By His breaking men's decisions and diverting their attentions."

2. It is said that humans are punished for their disobedience, but why is that so since disobedience has been predestined for them and it is not possible to escape from what has been predestined?

Answer: If you are to say that, you are also obliged to say: It is said that humans are rewarded for performing acts of obedience, but why is that so since obedience has been predestined for them and it is not possible to escape from what has been predestined? In fact, it is unjust to make qadr a pretext for disobedience and not to make it an excuse for obedience.

Another answer is that Allah (ﷻ) falsifies this excuse in the noble Qur'an and regards it as baseless saying:

﴿سَيَقُولُ ٱلَّذِينَ أَشۡرَكُواْ لَوۡ شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ مَآ أَشۡرَكۡنَا وَلَآ ءَابَآؤُنَا وَلَا
حَرَّمۡنَا مِن شَيۡءٖۚ كَذَٰلِكَ كَذَّبَ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبۡلِهِمۡ حَتَّىٰ ذَاقُواْ بَأۡسَنَاۗ
قُلۡ هَلۡ عِندَكُم مِّنۡ عِلۡمٖ فَتُخۡرِجُوهُ لَنَآۖ إِن تَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا ٱلظَّنَّ وَإِنۡ
أَنتُمۡ إِلَّا تَخۡرُصُونَ ١٤٨﴾ (سورة الأنعام: ١٤٨)

﴿Those who associated with Allah will say: If Allah had willed, we would not have associated [anything] and neither

would our fathers, nor would we have prohibited anything. Likewise did those before deny until they tasted Our punishment. Say: Do you have any knowledge that you can produce for us? You follow not except assumption, and you are not but falsifying.﴿ *(Qur'an 6: 148)*

Allah explains in the above verse that those who make qadr an excuse for their associating partners with Allah have predecessors who belied as they do and perpetuated their misguidance until they tasted His Wrath. Then, Allah commanded His Prophet (ﷺ) to challenge them to produce proof on the truthfulness of their excuse and explained that there was no excuse for them.

Thirdly, qadr is a concealed secret which is known to no one except Allah until it occurs. Where, then, has the sinner acquired the knowledge that Allah has preordained the sin for him or her before he or she advanced to it? Is it then not possible that an act of obedience has also been preordained for him or her? If that should be the case, why not undertake an act of obedience instead of venturing upon an act of disobedience and saying that Allah has preordained it?

Fourthly, Allah has favoured humans by giving them intellect and understanding. He revealed Books and sent Prophets to them, He distinguished for them the useful from the harmful, and provided them with free will and abilities with which they can tread whichever path they like. Why, then, would the sinner prefer treading the harmful way to the useful one?

If this sinner wanted to travel to a country and there were two roads leading to it — one of which was easy and safe, while the other was difficult and unsafe — would he or she

not take the easy and safe road for sure? He or she would certainly not take the tough and insecure road with the pretext that Allah has preordained it. If one did so, people would regard that as foolish and insane.

Therefore, the path towards good and the path towards evil should be treated equally as far as qadr is concerned. One should tread the way of goodness and not deceive himself/herself while treading the way of evil with the excuse that Allah has preordained it for him or her. Furthermore, real-life experience shows us that every person who is capable of earning a livelihood exploits every possible means to attain it and does not sit in his or her house and give up working, making qadr an excuse for that. What, then, is the difference between making efforts in the cause of the benefits of this world and making efforts in the cause of acts of obedience to Allah? How can you take qadr as an excuse for your acts of disobedience to Allah and not take it as an excuse for giving up work for worldly benefits?

The issue is crystal clear, but fanciful or rather impious desire makes one blind and deaf to the truth.

CHAPTER 5
Some Hadiths about Young People

Since the previous chapters revolve around problems of youth, I would like to conclude this book with some hadiths that talk about young people.[11]

1. The Prophet (ﷺ) said: «Your Lord is delighted (in the way that suits Him) about a young person who does not have youthful (lustful) desire.» (An authentic hadith recorded by Imam Aḥmad, aṭ-Ṭabarâni, Abu Ya'lâ, and Ibn Abi Âṣim)

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[11] The author cited these hadiths to underline the merits of youthfulness (hadith 4); the enviable position young people occupied in the heart of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) (hadith 3) and the care he had for their welfare (hadiths 5, 7, 11, and 13); their religious discipline and self-control (hadith 1); the highly-commendable role they played during the time of the Prophet (ﷺ) in demonstrating a high sense of responsibility and generosity (hadith 10); their gallant fight in the cause of Allah and their sacrifice of their most valuable possessions in order for the religion of Allah to prevail (hadiths 8 and 9); the confidence that our rightly-guided predecessors had in them by assigning them the most arduous tasks (hadith 6); a crucial role one of them will play when the end of time is near by showing the highest degree of faith and demonstrating an unsurpassed sense of bravery in the face of the tribulations of the *Dajjâl* (anti-Christ) (hadith 12); and the everlasting reward that awaits them on the Day of Judgement (hadith 2).

These hadiths go a long way in acquainting the young of this generation with the lofty and enviable feats of their predecessors so that they may learn from them and emulate them in all spheres of their lives in order to be included in the ranks of those youth to be sheltered under the shade of Allah on the Last Day. [Translator]

2. «Allah will give shade to seven on the day when there will be no shade but His. They are: a just ruler; a youth who has been brought up in the worship of Allah sincerely from his childhood; a man whose heart is attached to the mosques; two people who love each other only for Allah's sake and they meet and part in Allah's cause alone; a man who refuses the call of a charming woman of noble birth for illegal sexual intercourse with her and says: I am afraid of Allah; a man who gives charitable gifts so sincerely that his left hand does not know what his right hand has given;[12] and a person who remembers Allah in seclusion and his eyes become flooded with tears.» (Recorded by Bukhari and Muslim)
3. «Ḥasan and Ḥusayn will be the chiefs of the young dwellers of paradise.» (An authentic hadith recorded by at-Tirmidhi, Imam Aḥmad, and aṭ-Ṭabarâni)
4. «The dwellers of paradise will be told: It is for you to remain young and never grow old.» (Recorded by Muslim)
5. Abu Bakr said to Zayd ibn Thâbit in the presence of 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with them all): «You are a wise young man and we do not have any suspicion about you and you used to write down the divine inspiration for Allah's Messenger. So you should search for the fragmentary scripts of the Qur'an and collect them into one book.» (Recorded by Bukhari)
6. The Prophet (ﷺ) went to visit a young man who was dying and asked him: «How do you feel? The youth replied: I seek Allah's mercy, O Allah's Messenger, and I am also afraid of

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[12] That is, the charity is given so secretly that no one knows the amount

the consequences of my sins. The Prophet (ﷺ) said: These two feelings cannot be together in a slave's heart at this particular moment except that Allah gives the slave what he seeks and saves him from that of which he is afraid.» (A reliable hadith recorded by Ibn Mâjah and at-Tirmidhi)

7. Al-Barâ' ibn 'Âzib (ﷺ) said while recalling the events of the Battle of Ḥunayn:[13] «No! By Allah, Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) did not flee, [what actually happened was that] his young unarmed Companions met a group of men... who happened to be (excellent) archers. The latter shot at them a volley of arrows that did not miss. The people turned to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)... So he got down, prayed and invoked God's help...» (Recorded by Muslim)[14]

8. Ibn Mas'ood (ﷺ) said: «We used to fight along with the Prophet (ﷺ) when we were youths.» (Recorded by Muslim and Imam Aḥmad)

9. Anas ibn Mâlik (ﷺ) said: «There were some seventy youths among the Anṣâr[15] who were called the reciters of the Qur'an. They used to stay in the mosque and in the

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[13] Ḥunayn is the name of a valley between Makkah and Ṭâ'if where the famous Battle of Ḥunayn took place between the Prophet (ﷺ) and the Quraysh pagans in the eighth year after the *Hijrah* (emigration of the Muslims from Makkah to Madinah). The pagans were defeated in this battle. [Translator]

[14] The author quoted this hadith because of the mention of the young Companions in it in order to underline their active participation at the battlefront with the Prophet (ﷺ). [Translator]

[15] Al-Anṣâr means 'helpers'. They were Muslim inhabitants of Madinah who hosted the Prophet (ﷺ) and his Companions (may Allah be pleased with them all) when they emigrated from Makkah to Madinah and treated them with the best hospitality ever recorded in human history. [Translator]

evenings they would go to an area in Madinah and study and pray there. While they were in that place their families would think that they were in the mosque, while the people of the mosque would think that they were with their families. When the dawn appeared, they would fetch water and firewood and take it to the Prophet's apartment.» (Recorded by Imam Aḥmad, Bukhari, and Muslim) These youths also used to buy food with the proceeds of their firewood and water and give it to the poor emigrants from Makkah who had no family or clan in Madinah. They used to dwell in the shaded part of the Prophet's mosque or near it.

10. 'Alqamah, one of Ibn Mas'ood's companions, said: «I was walking in Mina along with Ibn Mas'ood when 'Uthmân met him and had a conversation with him. 'Uthmân then told him: O Abu 'Abdur-Raḥmân! Can we marry you to a young woman who will remind you of some of the past days of your life? Ibn Mas'ood replied: As you have said that, the Prophet (ﷺ) once said: O young men! Whoever is capable of maintaining a wife among you should get married, for marriage lowers the gaze and protects the private parts from fornication and adultery. And whoever is not capable should fast, for fasting curbs the sexual urge.» (Recorded by Bukhari and Muslim)

11. It is also reported in a hadith about the Dajjâl[16] that the

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[16] The Dajjâl literally means the false, the liar, the impostor. Religiously it means the anti-Christ or the lying Christ. He is the one the Prophet (ﷺ) told us would appear before the Day of Resurrection as one of the signs of the end of time. He will be a young man with long hair. He will be blind in one eye and his eye will look like a bulging-out grape. On his forehead will be=

Prophet (ﷺ) said: «The Dajjâl will call a man in the prime of his youth and will cut him with a sword into two pieces and will throw them. He will then call him and he will respond with his face bearing joy and smiling.» (Recorded by Muslim)

12. Mâlik ibn Ḥuwayrith (رضي الله عنه) said: «We came to Allah's Messenger while we were youths of almost the same age and stayed with him for twenty days and nights. The Prophet (ﷺ) was compassionate and kind. When he assumed that we were yearning for our families, he asked about those we left behind and we told him. He then said: Go back to your people and stay with them, teach them and command them (then he mentioned some things) and pray as you saw me praying. When it is time for prayer, someone among you should make the *adhân* (call to prayer) and the eldest of you should lead you in prayer.» (Recorded by Bukhari and Muslim)

This concludes what we want to say about young people and the issues that affect them. We ask Allah to make it useful.

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of all the worlds and may He bestow His peace and blessings upon our noble Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), his family, and his Companions.

=written the letters: ك ف ر signifying *kâfir* or infidel. He will perform numerous wonders and miraculous acts; many unbelievers and partial believers will be misled by his 'miracles'. He will eventually be slain by the Prophet 'Eesâ (Jesus) (*'alayhi as-salâm* — peace be upon him). See: *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhâri* (M. Muhsin Khan's translation), vol. 4, pp 432-433. [Translator]

Glossary of Islamic Terms*

adhân	اذان	the call to prayer
Anṣâr	أنصار	people of Madinah who welcomed the Prophet (ﷺ) and his followers from Makkah
âyah (pl. âyât)	آية	verse of the Qur'an or sign of Allah
Dajjâl	الدجال	Antichrist (anti-Christ)
da'wah	دعوة	disseminating the teachings of Islam and calling people to accept and embrace Islam
eemân	إيمان	faith; belief in all the six pillars of the creed of Islam
Hadith	حديث	the collected statements and actions of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) that with the Qur'an form the basis of Islamic law
hadith	حديث	a statement or action of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) that was remembered and recorded by his Companions and followers
Hajj	حج	the major pilgrimage to the Sacred Mosque, site of the Ka'bah at Makkah, to

* The Arabic words are transliterated according to the conventions of the Transliteration Chart found in this book. If a word has become part of the English language (i.e., is found in a dictionary of Standard English), that spelling is used in this book and appears first in this Glossary, with the transliterated form in brackets after it.

		be undertaken by every able Muslim once in his/her lifetime
ḥarâm	حرام	forbidden according to Islamic law
Hijrah	هجرة	migration: *esp.* the migration from Makkah to Madinah by the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) and his Companions that marks the start of the Islamic calendar
Ḥudood	حدود	*lit.* limits; religious laws based on the Qur'an and the Hadith
ḥukm	حكم	ordinance, ruling
kâfir	كافر	infidel; disbeliever
kufr	كفر	disbelief in Allah and/or what He has revealed
qadr	القدر	divine predestination; destiny; power; exact measure
Ramadan (Ramaḍân)	رمضان	the ninth month in the Islamic calendar; the month of obligatory fasting; the month in which the first verses of the Qur'an were revealed
ṣalâh	صلاة	formal prayer: a combination of physical postures, recitation, and supplication
Sharia (shari'ah)	شرعة	Islamic law derived from the Qur'an and the Sunnah
Sunnah	سنة	the practice and collected sayings of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) that together with the Qur'an forms the basis of Islamic law
tafseer	تفسير	exegesis: commentary, or explanation of the meanings (*usu.* of Qur'anic verses)
Ummah	أمة	community or nation: *usu.* used to refer

		to the entire global community of Muslims
waswâs	وسواس	*lit.* whispering; insinuating whispers/thoughts from Satan
zakât (or zakâh)	زكاة	Obligatory charity: an 'alms tax' on wealth payable by Muslims and to be distributed to other Muslims who qualify as recipients

Youth's Problems

Young people are humanity's future wealth. They offer hope and strength to their nations, and the directions they take in their lives determine the fate of their people. Understanding, addressing, and solving their problems and worries are thus of utmost importance for all members of society.

In this unique and lucid booklet the revered contemporary scholar, Shaykh Muhammad al-'Uthaymeen (may Allah have mercy on him), addresses some of the ideological and sociological challenges faced by modern youth. Starting with an astute description of the state of contemporary young adults, he outlines major issues hindering their progress on the straight path of Islam. He not only covers current issues such as joblessness, estrangement between the young and their elders, and keeping good company but also discusses subjects like predestination and the limits Islam places on individuals. In all instances, al-'Uthaymeen draws on the Qur'an and the authentic Sunnah to offer tangible solutions and to inspire the hearts of young people. The simplicity and straightforwardness of this work make even complicated issues easy to grasp. The wise advice the author offers is not only well-presented but practical and compassionate. This book will benefit not only the young of society but their parents and educators as well.

About the author

Shaykh Muhammad Sâlih al-'Uthaymeen (may Allah have mercy on him) was a prominent Islamic scholar of the late twentieth century. His writing is known for its wisdom and thoroughness. His books are based on extensive knowledge of the Qur'an and authentic hadith combined with insight into contemporary issues.

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